

Middletown Historical Society, Old Paradise Schoolhouse

In attendance: Pegée Malcolm, Judith Fardig, Bob Butler, Letty Champion, Edna Kent, David Kirchner, Rick Whitesell, Lester Hilton, Charlotte Taylor, Alan Clarke, Henry Duquette, Sally Small, and Evelyn Wheeler (via Skype)

Excused absences: Dory Wagner, Katherine Chansky, Gayle Waite and Roger Guillemette

Additional Attendees: Members from Tiverton's cemetery committee, Chip Mangio, Charlene Butler, and Maureen Buffi, secretary

Meeting called to order at 7:11 pm by Chair Pegée Malcolm

- **Introduction of September 19, 2012 meeting minutes**

A clarification was made to the minutes to specify North Burial Ground in Warren.

Motion to accept minutes was made by Alan Clarke, seconded by Letty Champion. Minutes were accepted 12-0. (One commissioner arrived after the vote.)

- **Meeting Agenda**

- **Update on Website**

Michael Laferriere sent an update via e-mail. The new site is registered as www.rihistoriccemeteries.ri. He is in the process of converting the data from the previous website.

- **GPS Update**

Evelyn reported via Skype that she was expecting to talk with Greg after Dec. 1. Volunteers are still taking readings and GPS units can

be borrowed from URI. A volunteer through ServeRI was working in Gloucester and Peggie noted he had contacted her.

- Peggie met with Mike Hebert about a memorial to the individuals buried under route 37. The job will be put up for bid, hopefully in spring. Pictures of people at IMH will be lasered onto marble stone.

- **Update on Signs**

Cemetery signs went out to West Greenwich, Richmond, Exeter, Warwick and a few for North Smithfield. There are a few more at the sign shop awaiting posts and hardware. Peggie will let everyone know which ones are left.

- Peggie noted that now that the commission is able to raise funds, the commission should be thinking about grants that they may be eligible for.

- **Update on Burials from Mausoleum at the Veterans Cemetery**

David reports that the Veterans Cemetery has received no additional burials since the initial one they received from the Mausoleum.

Member Updates/Comments

Judith Fardig: There was some vandalism in the North Burial Ground in Warren. Someone climbing for a finial knocked over a couple of stones. Some volunteers will repair the damage for free.

Bob Butler: Signs are being installed in West Greenwich. Repairs continue in the Plain Meetinghouse cemetery. In SK 020 volunteers will prep for a Rathbun family reunion.

Letty Champion: Intern Kurt photographed stones in Cranston, will send most to John Sterling. A stone that was found in Woonsocket was determined to belong in Common Burial Ground in Newport. It will be returned and reset. West Greenwich donated sign posts to Tiverton.

Edna Kent: In Glocester a couple of Boy Scout troops are working in 3 cemeteries and another was cleaned on Steere Hill. She will be getting info together for the town treasurer to clarify perpetual care in the town's paperwork. The old broken headstone of Abigail Winsor has been replaced and the old one buried behind the new. A service will be held.

David Kirchner: A stone belonging to a civil war soldier, found in a Frenchtown spillway after being replaced by a new stone, will be placed in the Veterans Cemetery at a monument commemorating all wars. Clarification will be made that it is not recorded as a Veterans Cemetery burial. The Veterans Cemetery received a grant from the federal government to adjust headstones, a process just underway.

Rick Whitesell: The Woonsocket Historical Society replaced an old chain link fence in one cemetery. In Capron cemetery there is a occasionally a volunteer. There has been some trimming of small trees, leaves need to be raked and a couple of stones need to be found.

Lester Hilton: There are 2 community service groups working in 2 cemeteries. In a third cemetery a Boy Scout finished and installed a split rail fence. The property owner was not in agreement and the scout ended up removing it.

Charlotte Taylor: An archaeologist will be monitoring a project on Water St. There is a Native American project ongoing in Hopkinton.

Evelyn Wheeler (Via Skype): Discussed the new state law allowing towns to offer a tax abatement to property owners maintaining historic cemeteries on their property. It still needs to be determined if a city or town will need to make a new ordinance or if they can follow as a state ordinance..

Sally Small: Received a call from a woman in Bristol wondering which database to enter updated cemetery information. Henry recommended she contact Ed Robinson regarding a database Foster uses which John Sterling can use to update his data. Their cemetery database can be viewed on Forster Preservation Society's website at fosterpreservationsociety.org Sally had questions concerning veterans' medallions for columbaria niche doors David has information on how to order and where she can view samples.

Henry Duquette: Visited Pocasset cemetery in Cranston following an e-mail about vandalism, including veterans' headstones. He didn't see widespread damage but 3 groups went to make repairs. Some stones were already damaged prior to the vandalism. In Burrillville the cemetery committee is discussing proposals for perpetual care with the town. The Marshall Hopkins Potter cemetery is becoming a showcase; stones are being reset and cleaned with D-2, volunteers are doing a great job and Betty Mencucci is conducting walking tours.

A tripod was purchased with a grant through the Levy Foundation

Alan Clarke: Reported having difficulty getting in touch with the board of directors, president, or vice president. of the Glenwood

Cemetery. He will contact the town manager. He was contacted by someone who came across a gravestone in their garden and he is trying to determine if it is a duplicate stone. He still has 25 cemeteries left to find in East Greenwich. There have been 2 volunteer cleanups and another is scheduled. Peggie is working with Alan to see if a town cemetery commission is feasible.

Dory Wagner (via e-mail): Is installing 37 signs in Richmond and working towards 96 signs in Exeter..

Roger Guillemette (via e-mail): Little Compton police are trying to determine if a stone belongs to an unidentified cemetery. He said they will be able to host the June meeting.

Peggie Malcolm: Cemeteries are being cleaned in Warwick. Volunteers are needed for a clean-up at Brayton cemetery.

Meeting adjourned at 8:46pm

Respectfully Submitted by Maureen Buffi, Secretary